

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Previously presented) An apparatus for coupling a hand-graspable knob to a plate comprising:

a plate having a pair of generally opposed surfaces and an oblong slot aperture extending between the pair of surfaces, and with said oblong slot aperture being defined by a pair of generally parallel opposite walls spaced a predetermined distance apart;

a coupling member having an external thread set and a pair of generally parallel side walls extending along a length of the coupling member and spaced for insertion into the slot aperture, whereupon insertion of the side walls into the slot aperture prevents the coupling member from being rotating relative to the plate about an axis generally perpendicular to the opposed surfaces of the plate; and

a knob having an internal thread set adapted to engage the external thread set of the coupling member thereby connecting the knob to the plate.

2. - 5. (canceled)

6. (Previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the coupling member has a larger diameter dimension than a thickness dimension of the plate, and a distance between ends of the oblong slot being substantially greater than the thickness dimension.

7 - 9 (canceled)

10. (Previously presented) An apparatus for connecting a knob to a plate comprising:

a plate having a pair of generally opposed major surfaces and an oblong slot aperture extending between the pair of major surfaces, said oblong slot defining a pair of generally parallel side walls;

an elongate threaded coupling member having an external thread set and a pair of generally parallel side walls extending along a length of the coupling member, said side walls

being spaced for insertion into the slot aperture, whereupon insertion of the side walls into the slot aperture prevents the coupling member and plate from rotation about an axis generally perpendicular to the major surfaces; and

a knob having an internal thread set sized to cooperate with the external thread set of the threaded coupling member, wherein said external thread set of the threaded coupling member is threadedly received within the internal thread set, and wherein at least a portion of the plate extends into the internal thread set of the knob to secure the knob to the plate.

11. (Previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the elongate threaded coupling member is two longitudinal portions of a threaded shank each having an threaded exterior surface.

12. (canceled)

13. (Previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the thickness of the plate is less than a diameter of the internal thread set.

14. (Previously presented) An apparatus for joining a knob to a plate via a threaded coupling member, said apparatus comprising:

a plate having an oblong slot aperture disposed proximate to an edge;

an elongate threaded coupling member having an external thread set and a pair of side walls spaced for insertion into the slot aperture, and said side walls preventing rotation of the coupling member relative to said plate about an axis generally perpendicular to the slot aperture when said side walls are inserted into said slot aperture; and

a knob having an internal thread set sized to cooperate with the external thread set of the threaded coupling member, said internal thread set operatively receiving a portion of both the external thread set of the threaded coupling member and a portion of the plate to secure the knob to the plate.

15 – 24 (canceled)

25. (previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the elongate threaded coupling member is two longitudinal portions of a threaded shank each having an threaded exterior surface and a substantially flat interior surface.

26. (previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the thickness of the plate is less than a diameter of the internal thread set, and a distance between ends of the oblong slot aperture is substantially greater than the thickness of the plate.

27 – 31. (canceled)